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Garage Expansion to Launch First Phase of Harlem-Ontario Development

Since approval of its new mixed-use development at Harlem Avenue and Ontario Street, Whiteco LLC is making good on its pledge to the Plan Commission, the Village Board and the community to fast track the main public parking feature of the plan.

Architects already have begun designing the western expansion of the Holley Court Garage, a step that will create 300 new parking spaces and more than make up for the surface lot spaces that eventually will be lost to the new development. Construction on the garage expansion could begin as early as June, and be completed by November.

"Parking is critical to development that occurs in any of our commercial districts, but especially downtown," said Village President Joanne E. Trapani. "Expanding Holley Court as the first step in the overall Whiteco project was a key element of their revised development plan. By adding parking first, the impact of the project on those who live, work and shop downtown can be lessened."

A second expansion planned for the Holley Court Garage as part of the overall development project will add another 200 parking spaces to the north side of the current structure. Once all expansion is completed, Holley Court will offer parking for more than 1,200 vehicles.

The Holley Court expansion also should help mitigate the loss of public parking that will occur if the privately owned lot on Marion Street behind Bank One is developed by its owner, as well as add to the overall supply in the downtown business district.

"The Village may have little influence on what is built on the Bank One lot," explained Development Services Director Michael Chen. "Private property owners who can satisfy all zoning requirements are not subject to review processes beyond those associated with the necessary construction permits. Moving ahead quickly with the first phase of the Holley Court expansion will help us to better serve those who will be most impacted by the eventual loss of the bank lot."

The Whiteco development, which received approval by a comfortable margin from both the citizen volunteers of the Plan Commission and the Village Board, will include a 14-story apartment building, six townhouses and 14,100 square feet of retail space. A *Trader Joe's* specialty market will fill most of the retail space.

For more information on the project, call 358.5640 or email devsvcs@oakpark.us. Information also is posted at www.oak-park.us.

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